

Name: _____

Date: _____



How to Write Like a Historian



A **historian** is someone who researches, studies, and writes about the past. Historians try to write about the past with accuracy so that their readers can learn about people, places, and events in history.

You can write like a historian if you take the time to prepare! Here are some tips:

1. **Choose your topic.** Think about a person, place, or event in history that you are interested in learning more about.
2. **Read two or more sources of information about the same topic.** Historians read a lot! It is important to read more than one text as you research your topic. Some sources might not be reliable. Others might leave out important information. Often, a source is written from only one perspective and leaves out the experience of other people.

The more you read about your topic, the more knowledgeable and well-rounded you will be. Remember, historians become experts because they read everything they can about the topic they are studying.

3. **Imagine what it would be like to live during the time period.** Put yourself in someone else's shoes! Think about how people lived differently than you do now. Did people have cell phones? Electricity? Running water? During the time period you are studying, what was the world like? What were people worried about? What were people excited about?

Ask yourself questions and try to understand how the world was different. This will help you write more accurately about the past.

4. **Consider multiple points of view.** History is often told from one point of view. A lot of the historical accounts we see are written by white men. But there were all kinds of people living and experiencing events in history. History is not just one person's story. It is the story of all people! Some people might see or experience things differently than others.

Historians must consider different perspectives when they write. Ask yourself, what would someone else think about this? Was anyone a victim in this situation? Who was happy about this event? Who was angry?

5. **Take notes.** Write down important facts from your research. Include names and dates. Make sure to record your own thoughts, impressions, or ideas about the topic too. You can organize your notes in a timeline, a web, or an outline. Some historians even include sketches in their notes!
6. **Write about the topic in your own words.** You might choose to include quotes from your research. But remember to write in your own voice. Historians try to make their writing personal by finding connections or perspectives that other people haven't written about before.

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Note-Taking Guide



Topic:	
Time Period: What was life like for people in this time and place? What else was going on in the world at this time?	
Source #1	Source #2
Important People: Why are they important? • •	Important People: Why are they important? • •
Important Dates: What happened on each date? • •	Important Dates: What happened on each date? • •
Interesting Facts: • • •	Interesting Facts: • • •
Point of View: Whose perspective is represented in this source?	Point of View: Whose perspective is represented in this source?
My Own Ideas: What do I think about this topic based on my research?	